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ABSTRACT

This paper illustrates the tensions that can arise between mentors and administrators as they seek to implement a new definition of their respective roles. The paper focuses on the strains of the mentor/principal relationship in the Los Angeles Unified School District, California. The problem examined is that of the complications faced by mentor teachers in asserting the role of instructional leader with principals who have traditionally assumed that role. Twenty-two mentor teachers each wrote six vignettes describing their successful and less successful experiences with their assigned mentee teachers, and their relationships with administrators and other colleagues. An analysis is presented of six vignettes. The first two deal with the mentors' reactions to inappropriate requests from their principals. The next pair illustrate how a mentor-teacher relationship can be compromised when a principal inappropriately divulges confidential information to the mentee. The last two cases illuminate the mentors' frustration when they work with mediocre neophytes. Some of the cases are accompanied by reactions from other teachers. A discussion of the analysis highlights problems in the areas of nation-wide induction programs, and the evaluation of teachers. Two model teacher evaluation systems are briefly described. (JD)

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EXPERT WITNESSES: MENTOR TEACHERS AND THEIR COLLEAGUES

Judith H. Shulman

Paper presented at the annual meeting
of the American Educational Research Association

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Expert Witnesses:
Mentor Teachers and their Colleagues

If we are going to make a dent in the problems we face in public education, we're going to have to find ways of permitting talented teachers to play a much larger role. We need to find ways of giving talented people, first-rate professionals, extra leverage.
(Bernard Gifford, What Next? More Leverage for Teachers)

This sentiment is echoed in the recent educational reform reports (e.g., Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, the Holmes Group, and the California Commission on the Teaching Profession). The reports propose the introduction of a new hierarchy and new roles in the teaching profession, and urge that selected teachers be given major responsibilities for supervision and school policy decisions. The California Commons Commission Report goes a step further, and recommends that teachers in advanced career participate in "peer evaluation" of their colleagues.

Implicit in these reports is a vision of shared leadership between principals and teachers, unprecedented in the recent history of schools. The reports tend to downplay the traditional role of principals as instructional leaders and supervisors of beginning and experienced teachers, and propose instead either to hand over this responsibility to lead teachers, as in the Carnegie Report, or to share the responsibility with mentor teachers/peer evaluators (Commons Commission Report). Absent, however, is a clear definition of the new role of principals or guidance about how teachers and principals ought to work together

as school leaders.

A number of informed observers have said recently that there is a mounting tension among school administrators over the growing responsibilities that teachers are receiving as a result of education reform [1]. Moreover, none of the reports address how to prepare principals for new roles in school leadership (Rodman, 1987).

The new reform also poses a challenge to teachers, who have traditionally lived within an egalitarian profession. Some teacher leaders have experienced difficulties asserting their new responsibilities and status with their colleagues, who are accustomed to norms of isolation and privacy. They also report that a small group of their colleagues are jealous and make snide remarks about their new status (Bird, 1986; Bird and Little, 1985; Shulman, 1986, Kent, 1986).

What kinds of tensions and dilemmas arise when teachers and principals are suddenly put in situations where both parties are responsible to assert leadership? What happens when the constraints of their respective roles limit their opportunities for working together? These tensions are apparent in school districts all over California, where mentor teachers provide assistance to beginning teachers, yet principals are required to evaluate the neophytes. This paper focuses on the strains of the mentor/principal relationship in one school district in California that uses funds from the California Mentor Teacher Program [2] to provide support to beginning teachers.

Background

In 1983-84, the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development conducted a comprehensive two-year study of first year implementation of the California Mentor Teacher Program (CMTP). The study included two surveys of all participating districts and 10 case studies of district. Guiding questions during the research included: What are the challenges and problems that mentor or master teachers face as they attempt to assist novice teachers? How does their new status affect the relationships that they have with administrators and other teachers? What guidance to policymakers and planners, both within the teaching profession and outside can be drawn from a careful study of a statewide innovation that is established to recruit, support, and retain outstanding teachers at the district level (Bird, 1986; Bird and Little, 1985; Bird and Alspaugh, 1986; Shulman and Hanson, 1985; Hanson, Shulman and Bird, 1985)?

Our most recent project was to develop a casebook (Shulman and Colbert, 1986), which includes vignettes written by practicing mentor teachers assigned to help beginning teachers, accompanied by analytic commentary. We designed the casebook to extend what we had learned in earlier case studies. We believed that, given appropriate preparation and support, experienced teachers could themselves contribute to the growing case literature in teaching, heretofore dominated by researchers.

The casebook highlights issues that reflect the complexity of asserting the new mentor role and presents vignettes that illustrate these concerns. Three themes permeate the book: (1) the challenges of providing assistance to novices who are not

accustomed to norms of collegiality, but are schooled in the norms of isolation and privacy, where help is only offered to teachers who experience difficulties and in the midst of colleagues socialized to the same norms; (2) the complications of asserting the role of instructional leader with principals who have traditionally assumed that role; and (3) the rewards and frustrations which accompany the new role of mentor teacher. In this paper, I will only deal with the second theme.

The setting. In Fall, 1985, the Far West Laboratory began a cooperative effort with the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) to improve inservice training for the its 900 mentor teachers who are all assigned to assist specific beginning teachers [3]. The task was to develop a casebook of vignettes, written by practicing mentor teachers, which would be used to train new and experienced mentors. The casebook was perceived by the mentors as a way of leaving a legacy about their work, and by the researchers as an opportunity to introduce a new function to the emerging role of master teachers, that of contributing to the emerging case literature on teaching.

Site Description. The Los Angeles Unified School District is the second largest district in the United States. To fill the growing number of empty classrooms, LAUSD has hired over 2500 new teachers, and expects to hire more in the near future. Approximately 50 percent of these novices have a bachelor's degree but no previous teacher preparation, and are teaching with an emergency credential. The majority simultaneously work toward their teaching credential at a local university.

Approximately five percent are secondary teachers enrolled in the district's teacher trainee program [4].

The district's mentor program was designed primarily to assist teacher trainees. Remaining assignments were given first to teachers with emergency credentials and then to those who had completed a credential program.

Methods

This research involved creating a case study of the mentorship based on analysis of the vignettes written by the mentors themselves. A researcher from Far West Laboratory and a district official who taught a masters level course in staff development for mentors, conducted the research. Twenty-two mentor teachers were enrolled in the course. Each wrote six vignettes describing experiences as a mentor teacher. They were asked to write about successful and less successful experiences with their assigned teachers, and to describe their relationships with administrators and other colleagues. Mentors were told that their collective work would result in a casebook for training other mentor teachers, and they would have joint authorship of the proposed book.

Data Collection. Each mentor wrote one vignette per week for the first six weeks of the eleven-week course. During each succeeding class period, the mentors presented their accounts to their colleagues, deliberated about common concerns, engaged in problem-solving, and shared related experiences. On two occasions, mentors wrote a reaction to a colleague's vignette, which described whether or not they had similar experiences, and

how, if at all, they would handle the situation differently. These reactions provide a multiple perspective on the situation described. During the last session, the mentors provided written feedback about the benefits of the reflective writing process.

Data analysis: Analyzing and grouping the vignettes. Analysis consisted of multiple stages: coding all 140 vignettes, selecting 49 vignettes for the casebook, asking ourselves, "What is this a case of?" (L. Shulman, 1985; Wilson and Gudmunsdottir, 1986), and grouping the cases around common themes. Casebook selections were based on the situation described, the general appeal of the account, the meaning or principles associated with the account, its contribution to our understanding of mentor issues, and an attempt to include at least one vignette from each member of the class. Chapters and subsections which illustrated common themes changed often, as a result of frequent sweeps through the vignettes looking for confirming and disconfirming evidence. (For a detailed account of the data collection, analysis, and development of the casebook, see Shulman and Colbert, 1987). For this paper I only examine those vignettes pertaining to the mentor-principal relationship.

Mentors and Administrators

According to the regulations of the California Mentor Teacher Program, a mentor teacher's primary function is to assist and guide new teachers. The statute also states that mentors cannot evaluate other teachers; that task remains delegated to building principals. Yet principals and mentor teachers in

districts all over California are asked to join forces in helping beginning teachers and to negotiate a shared leadership arrangement, where each will respect the boundaries of the other. To observe the law, one of the ground rules that has evolved is the "confidentiality rule:" mentors agree not to talk to their principals about the teaching practices of any one teacher. All interactions between mentors and other teachers are strictly confidential.

What happens if mentors and principals neglect to set some ground rules about their respective responsibilities? What happens if a principal goes beyond the negotiated boundaries of behavior and asks for confidential information? What are the repercussions for mentors if their colleagues view the new role as an arm of the administration? What recourse do mentors have who work with teachers they believe to be truly incompetent?

The six vignettes below address these questions. The first two cases deal with the mentors' reactions to inappropriate requests from their principals. The next pair of cases illustrates how a mentor-teacher relationship can be compromised when a principal inappropriately divulges confidential information to the teacher. The last two cases illuminate the mentors' frustration when they work with mediocre neophytes. Some of the cases are accompanied by reactions from other teachers, which provide multiple perspectives on the situation described.

I selected this set of cases because of what they illustrate about the complexity of the emerging role of teacher leaders when there are no shared agreements between principals and mentor

teachers regarding their respective responsibilities. Cases are particularly useful to describe the implementation of a new reform from the perspective of the participants who are involved in the reform.

Inappropriate Requests: Evaluation

The cases in this section highlight the difficulty of shared leadership when there is no collective responsibility for the quality of instruction. School norms allow teachers to close the doors of their classrooms and work in confidence. Schools have not been organized to support collegial assistance and enrichment. The reality is that, with few exceptions, teachers are rarely observed; and when they are observed, it is usually done by principals for evaluation.

Traditionally, teachers have resisted participating in the evaluation of their peers. Thus it is not surprising that mentor mentor teachers hesitate to be viewed by their colleagues as aiding their principals in this assessment process. Mentors have said to me that they enjoy helping their colleagues, but they do not want to be perceived "as an arm of the administration."

If teachers and principals are to work together to improve the quality of teaching, each must respect and be sensitive to the boundaries of their respective roles. In the two vignettes below, mentors describe being placed in difficulty when a principal stepped beyond these boundaries.

A Jeopardized Relationship

Mrs. Brown [a principal] is a competent leader who supports

the mentor program. She views it as a step in the right direction. With this stepping stone are many jobs and extra responsibilities. I share my expertise by participating in all extracurricular activities: leading staff development meetings, evaluating materials, coordinating special programs and projects, developing materials, and helping in all situations. There is mutual rapport and respect. Mrs. Brown is pleased because I am flexible and motivated.

Recently, a permanent teacher was having trouble with her reading program. I was told that all else had failed, and I was to go in and observe, demonstrate, suggest and save. There needed to be a change.

This ten-year teacher resisted the idea. She was angry, hostile and did not want me in her room.

I was told by my administrator to put everything -- all acts and words -- in writing. The teacher was told that I would be in her room. I felt very uncomfortable doing this and decided to discuss my feelings. This discussion put a damper on a wonderful relationship.

I am now often treated like my peers. This doesn't bother me, but I would like to be of greater assistance to this teacher. I would like to be the one that effects the change. However, the situation at present is not likely to boost my ego.

Resistance to Change

[After successfully helping an assigned novice accomplish some changes in his unit planning and classroom management], now she [the principal] has given me the task to work with a 20-year veteran who is resistant to change. She wants him to do laboratory activities with his general science classes. His excuse not to do it is that he is in the bungalow and has no access to equipment or materials, and it would take a long time to bring them in and set them up. He is a person that is in school from 8:00 a.m. to 3:15 p.m., is in the cafeteria during his conference period and during every break, and does not take any work home. The dean wants us to go in together and observe him; I indicated that I would try to see him this week.

I do not feel, however, that I should go in with the dean to observe him. I am concerned that I will be viewed as part of the administration and not part of the mentor program. I feel that the assignment is fine, and I can work with him as I do with other new teachers. I do not need an administrator to tell me what to do, especially in front of another teacher.

Reaction

I can relate to your experience with the dean who asked you to work with someone and then did not acknowledge any positive progress you had made with the teacher. The principal I had last year did this all the time. She told me everything she wanted me to do (to the letter), but never responded to any results.

The other request of having you go in with the dean is even more subversive. How dare this dean ask you to back her up in her evaluative capacity and have you share the negative aspects of an observation by the administration! It would destroy your working relationship with teachers.

My past principal might have done this also, though I never had a chance to find out. She was transferred. The principal I work for now is great. She never mixes mentor tasks with administrative ones and never asks for evaluations.

Confidentiality

The two cases below illustrate how the absence of shared agreements between mentors and principals can jeopardize rather than protect teachers with whom they both work. The mentor-teacher relationship in LAUSD is grounded in the expectation that their interactions will be confidential. That expectation can contribute to an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust between mentors and the teachers with whom they work. When the confidence is destroyed, however well-meaning the motives, the damage to a mentor-teacher relationship may be irreversible. Yet how can mentors and principals work together to assist new teachers if they cannot share information? In such situations, rigidly separate domains of interest and authority may be counter-productive.

Shattered

George was a first year teacher on an emergency credential. He was a music major and had no working experience with children. He began the school year as a kindergarten teacher. He was

teamed up with another emergency credentialed teacher who also had never worked with children.

The year began very shakily for George. Both he and his room partner were having personality conflicts. In addition, neither one was able to share any expertise for professional growth. It was the blind leading the blind. George continued to have problems. Finally the principal transferred both teachers to other classrooms. George continued working in kindergarten, but continued to have problems with classroom management. I worked with George very closely, planning, observing, sharing materials, and demonstrating various lessons with him. The principal stulled [evaluated] George for the first time and gave him an unsatisfactory evaluation. She was very displeased with his work.

She called me to her office, and asked how he was progressing. I told her that that information was confidential; she apologized for asking. She knew George was scheduled to observe my class on a Tuesday and asked how long he observed. I told her that he did not show up for the observation. She was furious!

The next day she called us both into her office. She had written an objectionable memorandum to George. In this memorandum, she used my name in a way to prove his incompetency.

As you can probably imagine, I was shocked and disappointed. She had broken a confidence that I had built with my mentee. George's confidence was shattered to say the least. He asked me if I was working with him or against him. Problems escalated and I was eventually released from this assignment due to conflict of interest of the principal and new teacher.

Words cannot express how disappointed I was with how this principal dealt with this new teacher. Granted, George had problems and was working hard to improve his weaknesses; but the principal's treatment of this situation was highly insensitive and unprofessional.

Kiss of Death

One of the most difficult aspects of mentoring, at least at my school, is keeping that ever-so-important confidentiality between mentor and mentee. It is not only important to keep this relationship intact, but also to prevent other circumstances from damaging or diluting the rapport between the mentor and the mentee.

A small incident occurred with a new teacher at my school that dramatized this to me. For obvious reasons, I will refer to this new teacher by the pseudonym Tim.

I observed several of Tim's classes, followed by post-

observation conferences and other informal chats. As usual I would first highlight the positive aspects of his teaching, briefly mentioning one or two suggestions he might work on to improve. During one of our post-observation chats, Tim mentioned he did not have enough time to properly prepare for his classes due to his new interest in working out in the gym during his conference period. I suggested that he might try some time management skills to make more efficient use of his time and reconsider the use of his conference period.

Several days later while I was meeting with a school administrator regarding mentor activities, he asked me to assist Tim in his lesson planning. Without any discussion, the administrator told me about Tim using his conference periods to work out.

During Tim's evaluation, an administrator expressed to him his concern about Tim's use of his conference period and mentioned that I as the mentor was aware of it. This was the kiss of death. Tim incorrectly inferred that I had related this information to the administrator instead of the other way around. Subsequently Tim did not avail himself of mentor time and stayed away from our new teacher meetings as well. After hearing about this through other new teachers, I met with Tim and explained the situation.

The result of this experience is that I now try to avoid having conversations or even listening to comments about new teachers from administrators. The level of rapport between mentee and mentor hinges on strong confidentiality.

Expert Witnesses, but also Silent Witnesses

The cases in this section describe the frustration that mentors feel when they work with teachers who they feel are ineffective or incompetent. Some mentors passsionately care about the quality of teaching that members of their profession offer to children, and are concerned about their professional image when they are assigned to help "untrained, inexperienced, and questionably qualified people," as in the next vignette, "Just Any Warm Body." They also suffer when they see teachers continue to assign what they believe are meaningless lessons, as in "Suggestion-Giver, Not Order-Giver."

Several important questions are raised. Since the

legislation specifically states that mentor teachers cannot evaluate other teachers, is it ever appropriate to report their findings? If yes, to whom? What is the responsibility of the principal? In short, what authority does a mentor teacher have over ineffective teachers? In California, mentors have no real authority in such matters, but they can make suggestions for improvement.

Just Any Warm Body

"Doesn't Ms. Jones have a mentor?" asked the principal sarcastically with one eye on me and the other on the complaining office manager.

The truth was that Ms. Jones had been through two mentors and a vice-principal. She was one of those new teachers who was being observed very carefully for possible dismissal. Ms. Jones was proving to be emotionally unstable, and we were all worried about the children in her care. Primary school children did not need to be subjected to a teacher who could trip over a television cord, fall to the ground, and then begin screaming at the top of her lungs for help. Even small children could not be convinced that their teacher was O.K., when she would just leave the room in the middle of the day and go to a neighboring classroom to inform the teacher that she felt like going home! No, children didn't need someone like this, but in these days of teacher shortages, our district had practically hired any and all "warm bodies" off the street, to use the words of a district official.

Furthermore, the last thing I needed was someone as obviously troubled as Ms. Jones to continue questioning my position as mentor. Even working with teachers I thought would eventually become satisfactory contributors to my profession was giving me doubts. I had thought often in my year and a half as a mentor: "How much am I sabotaging the quality of my profession by trying to mentor untrained, inexperienced, and questionably qualified people for teaching? How many children are being penalized with chaos because the public has too long viewed teaching as glorified baby-sitting, and because few people want that kind of prestige?" Well, the public was getting what they thought now! I had thought of the many Ms. Joneses around the state who had been lured into teaching by the new higher starting salaries. And I thought of all the good three-year veterans not earning as much as the new warm-bodied recruits only because they began a year earlier in the profession. With all this, I had concluded that something was very wrong, and my principal's remarks were just reminding me of these thoughts.

My thoughts were dissolved as I heard the principal and the office manager continue to joke about Ms. Jones' inability to do her register correctly. I already knew the vice-principal had helped her do her report cards. I certainly was aware of the incoherent conversations I had had with Ms. Jones (interrupting a discussion about lesson plans with a question about my preference between fruits and vegetables was my idea of incoherent). I was painfully faced with the fact that it was necessary to dismiss Ms. Jones soon, before she had tenure, but somehow all the joking seemed cruel. Even more pointed was the principal's next remark directed to me, "And I thought I was going to get some help from you with this case." Of course she meant I should have been reporting to her all the things Ms. Jones did or didn't do. Of course she knew that by law I couldn't do that kind of reporting. This at last was where it came down to the public paying the piper.

I exited the office "arena" and wondered how many other mentors were slowly and silently dying inside a little today over a Ms. Jones of their own.

Suggestion-Giver Not Order-Giver

Last November, I spent several hours observing in the classrooms of each of my mentees. I wanted to visit each one during the reading instructional time block in order to develop a better understanding of their individual management styles. During my observations I recognized a common need in all three classes: to develop a more organized and meaningful spelling program. Students were copying extensive lists, looking up definitions in dictionaries much too advanced for their grade level, and writing sentences that made little sense.

I decided to offer a mini-workshop after school to my mentees, planning to share with them some interesting and motivating techniques designed to improve students' spelling. I did a lot of preparation in anticipation of the many concerns that would arise.

However, nothing satisfied Ron. Almost every suggestion I made was answered with "Yes, but. . ." or "That won't work with my group." I've always felt that my role as mentor was that of a "suggestion-giver" rather than an "order-giver," so I encouraged him to try things in whatever degree he felt appropriate.

My two other mentees took many suggestions from the in-service and tried them in class. They gave me honest feedback, letting me know what worked and what needed to be modified. In Ron's class, students are still copying meaningless definitions and memorizing lists of words in isolation.

Reaction

Ron won't change until he wants to. As a mentor, I would continue to give him suggestions but attempt to remove yourself from responsibility of making him use them; it takes too much out of you. I see you as more valuable as a functioning mentor than as someone who is bending over backward to help someone who isn't really interested or able to accept the help. Back off and let him come to you for something meaningful. Continue to be friendly because he might need to get to know you as a person instead of the perfect mentor.

Reaction

In this case I would take the approach of thinking about the children. Ask him whether he thinks this is the best means for them to learn. Ask to see their papers or what forms of assessment he uses. Then put the pressure on him by saying the purpose of his job is to educate the children the best that he can. Depending on his response, keep putting pressure until some change comes about.

Reaction

You approached this situation with positive and meaningful alternatives. I would probably have taken this matter with Ron a step further.

I would have told Ron to expect me in his class on a specific day and time to demonstrate that indeed his students could benefit and understand this program in some capacity. After this demonstration I would discuss certain areas of modification, but I would certainly impress upon him the importance of reorganizing and reevaluating one's program.

Discussion

Analysis of these vignettes reveals several themes. The difficulties encountered when mentors and administrators attempt to work together in assisting a new teacher are quite serious. The essence of these problems appears to rest with a state of role conflict that arises when mentors attempt to perform their new function. Both principals and mentors are charged with overseeing the induction of new teachers. Both must be sources of support. Both must make evaluative judgements if their assistance is to be more than superficial. But only the

principal is permitted to exercise a formal evaluative role, even though the mentors are clearly the most expert witnesses; the mentors' role definition precludes evaluation. Moreover, the California Mentor Teacher Program statute requires that a veil of silence be drawn regarding the new teacher in all interactions with the principal.

As we see in the vignettes, this situation creates enormous role conflict for mentors in coping with their obligations as educators and school leaders. Ought the mentor to remain silent regarding a teacher's activities that may be harmful to children or colleagues? Does the neophyte's willingness to enter into the mentor relationship imply a social contact of privileged communication, like that of an attorney or clergyman?

The current situation is untenable because it puts both mentors and principals in an impossible situation. If they are to work as a team and do justice to the induction and support of beginning teachers, it appears that both mentors and principals must combine the information and insights that they each have.

Is such role conflict inevitable between mentor teachers and principals when evaluation is the issue? This dilemma can be better understood by examining the ways in which induction and evaluation of new teachers has been adddressed at other sites around the nation.

Teacher induction on a national scale. The problems that mentors and administrators face in this district are important because of the national push to adopt programs to support beginning teachers. In a recent survey, statewide teacher

induction programs are either implemented or being piloted in 35% of the states in this country (Hawk and Robards, 1987). Most often, the programs take the form of some sort of career ladder, where selected experienced teachers are given a stipend and released time to support neophytes. These programs respond to the large numbers of new teachers that school districts in nearly every state must must hire in the next few years, knowing that the "best and brightest" leave the classroom after the first five years. Schlechty and Vance (1983) estimate that 15% of the new teachers leave after their first year of teaching, and an additional 25% will leave by the end of their their year.

Because of these alarming figures, several major studies have been conducted on the needs of beginning teachers and teacher induction programs (e.g., Hoffman, Griffin, Paulissen, O'Neal and Barnes, 1985; Brooks, 1987). Researchers point out that the first year is the critical year of teaching, often determining whether a person will stay in teaching and what kind of teacher the person will become (Feiman-Nemser, 1983; Borko, 1986; McLaughlin, 1986). Isolation, the lack of appropriate support, and poor working conditions are among the prime reasons for the exodus (Hauling-Austin, 1987; Rosenholtz, 1985).

Teacher Evaluation. Concurrent with the proposals to support beginning teachers is an increased attention to the improvement of teacher evaluation procedures. In 1984, several researchers from the Rand Corporation (Wise, Darling-Hammond, McLaughlin and Bernstein, 1984) conducted a study of teacher evaluation. They found that teacher evaluation, when properly done, contributes to the improvement of teaching and schools.

Rigorous evaluation, however, is a difficult undertaking. In a survey of practices in 32 districts, summative evaluation was delegated to building principals in a majority of districts. But almost all the respondents felt that "principals lacked sufficient resolve and competence to evaluate accurately" (p. 75). Problems included lack of time and commitment, inadequate training to conduct evaluation in general, and a lack of background, knowledge and expertise to evaluate teachers in subject specialties. Moreover, the researchers found few districts where teacher evaluation represented a well-developed evaluation system in which relationships among various evaluation activities "were thought through and relationships between teacher evaluation and other district practices were established."

Models of collaborative evaluation. In two of these districts, Greenwich, Connecticut and Toledo, Ohio, the local teachers' associations designed a teacher evaluation system in which teachers and principals collaboratively take responsibility for teacher evaluation. In the former, each year teachers consult with either a principal or teacher leader (a teacher with part-time administrative status) to form an action plan for individual improvement. The evaluation process includes at least one observation and three conferences between the evaluator and teacher. Their efforts are supported by a cadre of senior teachers, who receive released time and a small stipend to assist teachers with curriculum and teaching practices.

In Toledo, experienced consulting teachers evaluate and provide support to all new teachers and experienced teachers

having difficulty. Depending on the number of teachers they are supervising at any one time (never more than 10), the consultants are released from classroom teaching responsibilities full-or part-time for up to three years. Principals evaluate all other teachers.

A third model of collaborative evaluation occurs in Charlotte Mecklenburg (Schlechty, 1985). Beginning teachers are assigned to advisory/assessment teams comprised of the principal, the assistant principal, and a senior teacher mentor. All members of the assessment team have been trained in the use of an observation instrument and are expected to use it during regularly scheduled observations and conferences. In addition, specially trained observer/evaluators have been employed to use the same instrument for more detailed summative evaluations. However, since the idea of "evaluation as a form of inspection is rejected, no distinction has been made between the roles of those who engage in formative and in summative assessment" (p. 40). All documentation is used for a teacher's evaluation.

Summary and Conclusions

This paper illustrates the tensions that can arise between mentors and administrators as each seeks to implement a new definition of their respective roles. A series of vignettes described how working relationships became strained when only principals were permitted to exercise formal evaluation, even though mentors were clearly more expert witnesses.

These implementation problems are significant in the light of mounting national tension between administrators and

teachers, as increasing attention is given to the importance of teacher leadership and induction programs. The problems that principals and teachers in the Los Angeles Unified School District faced, as they attempted to work together to support novices, appeared to diminish in other districts that used collaborative evaluation of beginning teachers. Principals and teachers in these districts were expected to, not prevented from, communicate with each other about an individual teacher's competence. More research and documentation must be conducted on those districts which appear to have resolved such tensions to ensure that the approaches continue to succeed and can be generalized, even partially, to other settings. If collaborative approaches work, they may exemplify the vision of shared leadership that is implicit in the recent reform reports.

Endnotes

1. In a clash that highlights the emerging tension between teachers and administrators over their roles, administrators in Rochester, New York have filed suit to dismantle a local mentor program where mentors both assist and participate in the evaluation of beginning teachers. The administrators claim that the mentors are encroaching on their supervising responsibilities. In a similar vein, verbal clashes have also occurred between the president of a local New York administrators' union and the president of the city's board of education about about a proposal to train a highly paid cadre of "master teachers" to assist beginning teachers. Arthur E. Wise stated that "these are perhaps the first signs of resistance to the emerging idea of teacher professionalism" (Rodman, 1987).

2 The California Mentor Teacher Program is funded by the state's Hart-Hughes Education Reform Act of 1983 (SB 813). This legislation, in effect as of January 1, 1984, is intended to reward and retain excellent teachers and to contribute to school improvement. The statute allocates funds to participating districts on a formula basis, allowing $4000 stipends for district-designated mentors, and $2000 per mentor for district implementation. The mentors' primary role is to guide and assist new teachers; they may also guide and assist more experienced teachers and develop special curricula. The statute leaves considerable latitude for California's diverse school districts to design their own programs.

3. Mentor's selection procedures included paper screening, personal references, interviews, and classroom observations. Once selected, they must complete a 30-hour series of workshops on the mentoring process before asserting their new responsibilities.

4. The teacher trainee program is an alternative teacher credentialing program under the auspices of a school district. In establishing a trainee program, school districts must (a) verify to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing that fully credentialed teachers are not available; (b) create and implement a professional development plan for teacher trainees with provision for annual evaluation, a description of courses to be taken, and a plan for the completion of all preservice activities; (c) consult with an accredited institution of higher education that has a state approved program of professional preparation; and (d) require that each teacher trainee be assisted and guided by a certificated employee of the school district who has been designated as a mentor teacher. In Los Angeles, teacher-trainees can become credentialed at the end of two years.

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